



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

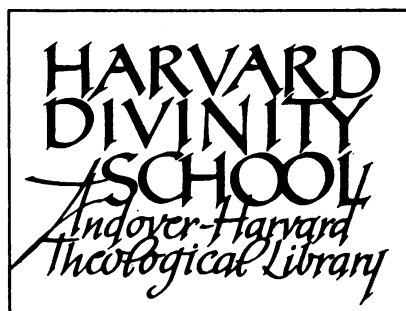
ANDOVER-HARVARD LIBRARY



AH 5BNQ 6

145.4
DALL

Digitized by Google



十一

“THE THEIST’S CREED;”

A LECTURE

GIVEN BY REQUEST OF

THE SOCIETY OF THEISTIC FRIENDS

(President, BABU KESHUB CHUNDER SEN,)

Opening their Course of 1872,

Charles Henry ^{BY} *Appleton*
C. H. A. DALL, M.A.

“I avow my faith in Theism, and (so) become a member of the Brahmo Somaj of India.”—(K. C. SEN, and C. H. A. DALL.)

“Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace.”—(*Chief Work of the “Founder of Brahmoism,”* RAMMOHUN ROY.)

Calcutta:

CALCUTTA CENTRAL PRESS COMPANY, LIMITED,

5, COUNCIL HOUSE STREET.

1872.

18 Oct., 1898.

Gift of
Rev. John D. Wells (57)

145.4
Dall

H
D
A
The

THE THEIST'S CREED.

A MEETING of the Society of Theistic Friends was held at the Training Institution, on Monday Sept. 16; Babu Keshub Chunder Sen in the chair.

The proceedings of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

There being no other business before the meeting, the President called on the Rev. C. H. A. Dall, M. A., to deliver his lecture on "The Theist's Creed."

Mr. Dall then rose and said :—

Mr. President, Members of the Society of Theistic Friends, Progressive Brahmos and Seekers of the only true God, Men and Brothers,—In response to your invitation, I am here to open your course of lectures, and to declare, as briefly and clearly as I may, what I understand by "The Theist's Creed."—Not the Theist's Faith; high as heaven, deeper than hell, broad as the universe. No. But the Theist's Creed in the close construction of that term;—the call, the cry, the motto, the exponent, the watch-word and countersign of Theism: simple as light; central as the sun. The sun, sending out his millions of rays in all directions, declares himself to us in a monosyllable. Even so the Theist's Creed declares itself to India and the world in a single word. That all-glorious word is Theism. On the second day of last November, our own Keshub Babu wrote it; and I signed it: "I do hereby avow my faith in Theism and become a member of the Brahmo Somaj of India."

Would that all who love India might sign it, and walk and work together, east, west, north, and south, under its guidance, in the light and liberty of the children of God. "*Theism*," is the manifesto,—the simpler the grander,—to which the hand of our God has brought us. *In hoc signo vinces*. This is henceforth our banner of victory. "*Theism*" is our one beacon and pole-star of absolute religion. "*Theism*" is all we need, in India, to concentrate and rally the true church militant. This I can say honestly as a Unitarian Christian, though many an orthodox Christian cries shame, shame! Yes: so excellent a man as the Rev. Edward Storrow, my personal friend, felt bound to declare, in 1859,—["India and Christian Missions," Page 90] that to him such talk is infidelity. "Infidelity," he says, "whether it bear the name of Vedantism, Brahminism, Natural Religion or Deism, which is only worthy of our pity or abhorrence." Not all Christians are thus hopeless or abhorrent of our work; and possibly this very brother would not think of us now, as he did thirteen years ago.—*Theism* is man's spiritual allegiance to the Only God, with all his heart and all his soul and all his mind and all his strength. Come what will,—through honor and dishonor,—we resolve, by the help of God, to preach *Theism* where the grossest pantheism riots and turns all forms of matter into objects of worship;—where polytheism drives religion mad with its millions of immoral deities;—and the baffled soul retreats to atheism in its bewilderment and its despair. Not these, we cry. No, no, *no*! we say to these defrauded children of our Father. Not atheism; not polytheism; not pantheism, which says, Worship what you will, you can't go wrong, since all is God. No; leave these distracting jungles and come up the mountain. Breathe *Theism*, sweet and pure, as you

go up and up, to meet God, out of matter and above all, while He is through all, and in us all. Here, you fevered ones, inspire Theism; which, from the oneness of the divine harmonies in this universe, knows God as one, and without a second.

On this table-land of pure Theism lived, for fifteen centuries, the Hebrew people. On it they lived so well, as to produce, before the time of Jesus, the best religion that the world could show, and manhood no less divine than that of Abraham and Moses, David and Solomon, Isaiah, Daniel and Nehemiah. Jesus himself—whatever *else* he was,—was the consummate flower and best fruit of pure Hebrew Theism. And the only prayer Jesus ever taught his disciples is that purely theistic prayer, 'Our Father who art in heaven.'

If all this be true, then let India's Theism rise and shine;—put on her strength, and hurl at our wide-spread practical atheism the truth of God, in such unanswerable appeals as the Psalmist's cry, "He that made the eye, shall He not see? He that formed the ear, shall He not hear? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall He not know?" Theism, in India, is no doubtful word, and has a large work to do. Language, to be sure, like life, is *what we make it*. So the sceptical, the timid, the foolish and such as can take even God's name in vain, may turn Theism into vanity and laugh it to scorn. I say, let those laugh that win. For ourselves, we will quit us like men; do our duty to our banner-cry; truly define and defend it, in our conversation and our prayers, our confession and our conduct;—and, so help us God, we will make it our own and India's quickening and salvation. Our little leaven shall yet leaven the lump. Let our clarion blast give no uncertain sound, and then, as Emerson would say, 'the unstable estimates of men' shall turn to him

that gives it the true ring 'as the heaped waves of the Atlantic follow the moon.'

Yes:—be it said, once for all, that we are Theists; we, who accept the true and godly out of all religions, and, with such cardinal truth, go forth to emancipate India from the slavery of her superstitions; to save this land from the deep damnation of her present idolatry, and from all her errors and her woes, as God shall work in us to will and to do. In the word *Theism*, we have all the written bond that we desire; all the creed of union that we need; all the fixed profession that our present circumstances demand. *Theism* is the proud and pregnant word, rejecting an epithet,—which sufficiently declares that our battle is for *God, Theos, The Maker* of all, against all enemies of His that He shall give us wisdom and power to subdue.

Our main point is now, I trust, sufficiently clear; namely that *Theism* is the theist's creed. Yes. As theists we condense our creed into one word: and keep it one, as God is one; jealously and deliberately; knowing what we do, and why we do it. Enough.—We may now go on to show how true Theism welcomes to its fellowship men of every creed subordinate to Theism; men of every faith that may with truth and honor and consistency contend for Theism; all lances that are honorably free to fight for Theism. Nor will we doubt the sincerity of any who say they are thus free, and not against us but for us, while they are willing to have us kindly question their deeds, and do by their faults as we would have them do by ours.

Turn to the wise man, of blessed memory, who founded Indian Theism, the Rajah Rammohun Roy, and what says he, in that famous Trust Deed of his? Here is catholicity: here is comprehension. He

founds the Brahmo Somaj,—Brahmo being, of all the names of God, on earth, the most ancient and original,—“*to strengthen the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions and creeds.*” All churches, all creeds, Hindoo, Mahomedan, Parsee, Christian, all, were to meet and join hearts and hands in the Brahmo Somaj; even all that worship God, one God, Brahmo, the Eternal Spirit, Porompitah, the Infinite Father.

Can all these come together? Can they worship and work together, even as those twelve tribes did, who, with one voice sang “Oh Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!” Why not? I ask. If there be a human family, why not? If right-minded men constitute “the great family of earth and heaven,” why not? To me it seems both possible and practicable.

Among the many reasons that could be given, why it is so, that which is specially pertinent to the subject you have assigned me, is the extreme simplicity and catholicity of our creed. Our creed is our crown. Do you not see that, by resolute adherence to a thing so simple, we set our standard on a rock, so high that the powers of hell can never touch it? Yes; we have yet to realize how much we have gained by our brave refusal of a definite list of articles of faith, as the ground of our free catholic union. Thank God we have, once for all, rejected and repudiated that thing which too many Christian bodies adopt and call a creed; and which, to their sorrow, has often bound them hand and foot, with its expressed or implied cursings and anathemas, declaring that whosoever dares to think aside from that formula “shall without doubt perish everlastingly.”

It is the proper business of every thinker to know

what he thinks, and to grasp his own principles firmly in his mind. He should be ready on all proper occasions to define and declare them. This, observe, is the duty of the individual: and other thinkers are free to adopt as much or as little of his platform as they approve. Only the feeble-minded and the unthinking must adopt it entire: since none that think largely, can think identically. I repeat it, a creed is not a bad thing for any one to make for to-day's use, and for his own behoof. Yet even as made by the individual for the individual, it is soon outgrown, and confines the enlarging mind within garments too small for it. That is the misery of creeds, as attempted statements of high spiritual truth. They soon become idols; or fetters. They are pledges not to grow.

From the slavery of creed we have escaped to the liberty of association; to the freedom of a brotherhood not necessarily confined to India, but wide as the world of educated and thinking humanity. We have narrowly escaped this peril; as I, for one, have had occasion to know. I have met with it in Southern India, in the case of Somajes that sought advice in drawing up "a constitution:"—not to mention that brothers' controversy which went on for two or three years between our president and myself, upon the question of a creed or a *cry*, for this great movement of the spirit of God, which to-day is lifting India out of darkness into light, and is turning hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of hearts towards a purer faith, which must ultimate in some form or phase of Theism, Brahmoism.

Aye, *some* form of Theism. That it should take on many forms, as many men have many minds, is inevitable. If the right spirit, the spirit of truth be there, the forms cannot be too many. For God's

sake let us be generous towards them all. God loves variety in men as in flowers; in masses of men as in masses of foliage. The cruel, the bloody, the accursed mistake of the past, has been to torture, crush and burn these out of existence. God forgive them, they knew not what they did. He will not forgive us if we do it. Brothers we must follow God and nature in this matter, or we shall cut off the right arm of our strength. Let it be settled, once for all, that we welcome Theism in its diversity of thinking, as heartily as we do in its unity of feeling. If Theism be not large enough to shelter and feed and employ every brigade, every regiment, every company of the genuine army of the True God, each speaking its own tongue, and choosing its own leader, ancient or modern, in its own right of freedom,—then give us something broader and more catholic. Theism, God be praised, is catholic. It is of all nations. It is for all monotheists. In its mode of culture, and special training, it may be Christian, it may be Mahomedan, it may be Vedic or Hindoo. Nor must we limit it to India. It belongs not to this Eastern nor to that Western people, but to all people; all to whom it is the first of religious truths that, as sons and daughters of one Father above, they are bound to treat each other as brothers and sisters on the earth. Our natural and inevitable dissent, in the welcome diversity of mind among us, will lead to our division into many parties, churches, families, fraternities, somajes, within the Great Circle, the Grand Somaj of Theism.

This manifold dissent must not only give us no pain or anxiety, it must rejoice our very hearts; like the shooting forth of branches on a favorite fruit-tree, in all directions. This branching of the tree of Theism is for its health; though sectarians

most miserably mistake it for disease, and the splitting of the tree into fragments. Theism in its *special* forms of culture and development will be like the staple food of one continent. It will be rice in India, wheat in Europe, maize in America. Some Brahmos will prefer to confine the good name of "Brahmoism" to Indian or Hindu theism. Let us not quarrel with them about a name. All will see that it was only possible for an American Unitarian to be a Brahmo, from the day when the leader and guide of progressive Brahmoism released it from imprisonment in India. From that day we, progressive Brahmos, believe, not in Indian theism alone, but in Theism; Theism without an epithet; Theism the world over; including, of course, the perfect Theism of Jesus: Theism as Essential Religion, Godliness, God-ism.

Now let generic Theism descend as the dew from heaven, to bless the evil and the good, the just and the unjust. Let it vivify its special growths in all lands, like the common air. Let India have her theism, both conservative and progressive; of the old school and the new school, and of fifty or a hundred schools, provided each be honest and true to its light. Let England have her theism; Germany hers; America hers. Meantime Theism *per se*, God's religion, the True Light, Light for every man, can never be national and local, like the religions of the Past. It is international and universal. The common law of England is not international law; neither is the Code Napoleon the Law of Nations. The rights and duties of nations towards one another have always existed; but it is almost a new thing for nations to treat one another generously, fraternally and lawfully. Until recently, might was right. International Law is the latest and highest distillation of all law. It is, or is

to be, the Law of law : justice on its broadest plane : right, not simply national, nor continental, but human. And such is generic theism. We have only begun to understand it. Latent in all sincere yearnings after God and duty, since God created man in his own image,—it awaits the birth of a man large enough to discern and record it : if Jesus was not that man. It is the not-yet-ripened fruit of all that is religious in human life. It will ultimately rule the race as a vital faith ;—as international righteousness, human piety, absolute religion.

This Theism is not 'Christianity.' I cannot make it so. Both history and geography forbid it. The "Ten Great Religions," so generously handled by Dr. James Freeman Clarke, in his recent work, are, as he says, "ethnic :"—they are national religions. China, Thibet, India, Persia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Scandinavia, Judea, Arabia,—each of these ten has wrought out, and lived on a "great religion." And which of these was Christian ? Not one. That Christianity has done more for Theism than all the ten put together, and, of all the great religions is immeasurably the greatest and most catholic,—and should grow among them to be, as Dr. Clarke says, a *pleroma*, the religion of universal unity,—I love to think, and hopefully believe. But that is not now the point. The question is, Can a man be a theist without being 'a Christian ?' To this I reply, simply, yes ; assuredly he may. To make this matter clear, I have referred to national and international law, as of one spirit, consentaneous, harmonious, but never identical. They are two things. They cannot be the same. The world must have them both. Christianity has historical and geographical and statistical relations, which I cannot ignore. It commands, as yet, the nominal allegiance of less than

a fourth of living men. Define it as liberally as Drs. Hedge, Clarke and others define it, and Christianity has reached a very small fraction of the race. That England and America, Christian nations, are far better educated and are doing more for the world than Mahomedan Persia and Arabia, or than the Chinese and the Hindoos, is undeniable. But this again is aside from the question before us. The question is, Does all goodness show itself 'Christian'? I say no. Others than Christian parents love their children. Christians are not the only men who tell the truth. Others than Christian people try to do right; think deeply, love truly and pray sincerely. Who shall deny it?

Every long-lived religion has lived on the truth that was in it. Mixed more or less with error, as all religions in this dark world must be, it had something nutritious in it. However thick its husk of error, however hard its shell of superstition, it had a kernel of vitality within. Men, it may be, lived poorly on it, but they lived. Now, to all the good that we can cull out of these manifold struggles of the soul towards God, I give the name of godliness, which is my synonym for generic Theism. To me the heart of Jesus Christ has been the fountain of but one of many religions, and only this can I call Christianity, notwithstanding I am thus apparently contradicting eminent authorities, and good Unitarians.

For example, the Rev. George L. Chaney of Boston, United States, has an article in a late number (June 1872) of "Old and New," on "The Brahmo Somaj." In it he says—"If Ram Mohun Roy the founder, and Chunder Sen the leading teacher of this society are fair exponents of the character, spirit and purposes of the Brahmo Somaj, what better thing could we do than to accept this society as the

providential Church of Christ in India?"—Not so do I accept the Brahmo Somaj. Theirs is another branch of the Theistic tree. Nor can I ever accept them as Christian Brahmos, Christian Theists, until they discover and confess that the spirit of the life of Jesus is the *best* known way to peace with God. In other words, until they bravely join Ram Mohun Roy as professed "followers of Christ"; of Christ Jesus above all other historic sons of God. That is my position; and it is Ram Mohun Roy's. You may see it published here, in this volume, the crowning work of his life, "The precepts of Jesus the Guide to Peace and Happiness."

Another good Unitarian, a German, the Baron Von Holzendorff, said in London, at a public meeting, not many weeks ago, that "the general, international religion of mankind was gaining disciples in Germany." "The Chevalier Bunsen," he remarked, "had destroyed the old definition of the Christian faith, which was, that there can be no true religion except Christianity as expressed in the old tenets." "Enlightened Germans share with Bunsen the opinion that *wherever there is true and pure religion, there is a Christian faith*, even if it does not profess the name." And the Baron goes on to prognosticate that "this principle of Unitarianism" (as he calls it) "is to become international," not only "throughout Europe and America, but in those parts of the world where are religions that have never been called Christian." Now, I rejoice in all this *Theism*, but cannot yet identify it with Christianity.

Just so I am compelled to dissent, at least in form, from Dr. Clarke of Boston. Rev. James Freeman Clarke, in "Ten Great Religions," (Zoroaster, p. 207) says; "To fight the good fight of justice and truth, as the disciples of Zoroaster tried to fight it," (centuries

before Jesus Christ was born) " this is still the true work of man :—and to make a union of those who wish thus to fight for good against evil,—this is still the true Church of Christ." This seems to say that all good is Christianity, and every good man a Christian.

I cannot say so.—I see that, in America, this way of identifying Christianity with absolute religion, is a natural and noble protest against putting fetters upon faith, and God's church in chains. I see also that, in India, a different and even opposite meaning is suggested, namely a monopoly of all good and all honor, through all time, for one who was born in Bethlehem. It need not be said that, to men like Drs. Hedge and Clarke and Theodore Parker, such narrowness is impossible. Parker is such a favorite of the Brahmos, that I need hardly remind you of his words, (*Discourse of Religion*, p. 188,) "Whoever obeys Reason, Conscience and the Religious Faculty is essentially a Christian, though he lived ten thousand years before Jesus; or living now, does not own his name." Essentially a Christian? He means a true man; a son of God; essentially a Theist; or, as we now declare it, a Brahmo of the largest sort.—No: the Brahmo, of that sort, is not now to be confounded with the Christian. Though the broader thing is not necessarily the better, nor the country to be always preferred to the city. Bengal is broad, but I like living in Calcutta. I am a Brahmo residing in that part of our Father's Kingdom which Jesus built. He is still ruling and improving it. I like it; and shall not leave it.

Thus I am with the Brahmos as a Theist, to walk with them, in the spirit, on that lofty plane. I could not heartily be one of them until they themselves had mounted to that plane, and nobly resolved to

have that, and nothing lower, for their ground of union; and to leave each man free, to all of his individuality which might consist with that.

I do not quite like the comparison of the varied harmonies of spiritual relationship, to genus and species in lower planes of life, where "birds of a feather flock together;" where our blossoming *Ponchiana*, for instance, is familiarly known to us in its three species, the *Colvillia*, the *Pulcherrima* and the *Regia*; or our Indian Fig, in its commoner natural varieties, the *Elastica*, the *Indica* and the *Religiosa*. There is here something too rigidly fixed and unchangeable for the varied and ever changing circles of relationship in the human family. Let it suffice that there do exist in the true family of Our Father natural and beautiful circles of affinity with which no Theist's Creed of ours shall ever interfere. In this view of things let me be more, though you be less attracted by Ram Mohun Roy's declaration that Jesus is the elder brother of us all; the great first-born; greatest in service, and ever simple as a child: fully justifying the Unitarian Christian cry "God our Father, man our Brother, Jesus our Guide."

A book-guide, and a man-guide are good things, to have in a strange city. Choose, every man for himself; and, the best he can find. For mine, I prefer Jesus, and the record of his life; "Jesus Christ and him crucified." Get better if you can. As I know no better than this guidance, called Christian,—and after a forty or fifty years' use of it, find herein nothing inconsistent with simple and free godliness,—which is catholic Theism,—this special preference of a guide so clearly Christian, makes me, for aught I can see, a Christian Brahmo. Does it not? Surely it does.

Again; a devout and simple Theism is the

glory of the Koran. You know the Koran everywhere honors Jesus; while it jealously guards the absolute unity of God. You know it makes Jesus say to God (in its fifth chapter) "I have not spoken to men anything but what thou didst command me, namely, Worship God, my Lord and your Lord."—Now I deeply regret that the majority of those called Mahomedans, like the majority of those called Christians, are too blindly devoted to Mahomed and to Jesus to be consistent Theists. So I think. But I cannot perceive how such as rest in common-sense views of Jesus on the one hand, and of the Koran on the other,—views which do nowise conflict with Theism towards God and the Brotherhood of men,—should not be fairly and simply called Jesus Brahmos, and Moslem Brahmos. And so receive the combined name which conveniently characterizes at once their Theism and their school of Theism; their position, alike generic and specific; just as we have Latin Christians and Greek Christians; and sincere Protestants trinitarian and unitarian. The danger brings not the *necessity* of conflict; and, 'nothing risk, nothing win.'

I would copy no man *servilely*; not Jesus, and certainly not Ram Mohun Roy. "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God;" are words of Jesus, and of purest Theism. That the lowly man of Nazareth, my good pastor, and best brother, both in principle and in practice, for himself and for others, made *him* the greatest saviour and guide of guides for men, who *served* man most and wisest and longest and best,—this I think it was, that made Ram Mohun Roy choose him, as I do, above all others, and reckon himself, once for all, among "the followers of Christ." In the ardor of his devotion to Jesus, he even closes the first of his three "Appeals in defence of the precepts of

Jesus" with "repeating his prayer that the day may soon arrive when every one will regard the precepts of Jesus as the *sole* guide to Peace and Happiness." (page 312.) Much as some of us rejoice in these words, no Brahmo will sacrifice his individuality to Ram Mohun Roy; since God permits no two blades of grass in the same field to grow exactly alike.

Some of you, perhaps, sincerely believe that you see a better ideal of life and religion than that of Jesus. If this be true of "progressive" Brahmos and of such as assemble at the *Mandir*, then let us acknowledge that "Progressive Brahmos" are not Ram Mohun Roy's, or Christian Brahmos. Keep your distinctive name, brother theists, and allow us to keep ours; acknowledging as you frankly do, that *your Founder is with us*. Let it remain an open question, which of these two co-working fraternities is ultimately to win the other. Meantime, hoping that you will one day join your great Ram Mohun, and take the way that Jesus trod, I would be the last to hurry you. I respect your conscientious deliberation. I allow that you cannot honestly be Christian Brahmos, until the Spirit of Truth, to whom you look to guide you into all truth, move your hearts to answer the call of your noble Rammohun, as of Jesus, to the sin-weary and heavy laden to take up the cross of Christ.

All good is of God. It comes out of one fountain, and as such it sounds like blasphemy to call it Hindoo, Mahomedan or Christian. It is only when we come down from God to his earthly instruments of benefaction, that we can call charities by special names. Then, the self-sacrifice of Regulus, returning to Carthage to die for the aggrandisement of Rome, becomes Roman self-sacrifice. Then the charities extended, in this city, by noble Hindoos, to

thousands of refugees from the Orissa famine, are Hindoo charities. Then the numerous public institutions of Bombay either founded or aided by Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, become Zoroastrian. Then the countless benevolent establishments of London may be called Christian. All these charities, with every good and perfect gift, in every nation and in every soul, descend from the one Soul of Our Father. None of them are the worse for not being 'Christian.' Christianity would be the worse if it did not, as it does, welcome and rejoice in them all.—So, then, one may be a Theist without being 'a Christian': and he may be a Theist *and* a sincere follower of Christ. I think that point is clear. India's religion of worship needs Jesus' religion of work: nor will she ever be self-reliant or self-governed, till she obey the call of Jesus to do God's will *on earth* as it is done in heaven. So I believe.

But, my friends, I am not here to-night to plead for Jesus, or to convert you to even Unitarian Christianity. For you see that, by my view of the Theist's creed, good and honest men may be Theists without being Christians. That creed I trust I have now declared, and thus sincerely fulfilled the task that you assigned me.

Brothers of the Society of Theistic Friends, will you accept, from your lecturer, fifty copies, just out of press, of my humble beginning to enunciate Theism. This is my "*Theism; in questions and answers.*" If you like these, send more questions, for consideration and reply. "What is True Religion?" "Who is God?" "How is sin forgiven?" To a list of such questions, these are in part my answers; as a Theist of the School of Jesus.

Now, may I say, in closing, that you, Mr. President, never raised a nobler banner-cry, or one more

needed in this dreamy East, than that which you gave to your "Good Will Fraternity," in the words "All Religion is Life, all Life is Growth." Too long has India sought, by absorption into the Infinite, to escape the realities of human life. God has called you to high duties on her behalf. Now, to encourage her to do nobly, let us show her, and keep before her eyes, and in her memory, all that great and good men have nobly done. What man *can*, can man. What man *has done*, and better, man may do. Only be as true to the Real, in the coming days, Mr. President, as you yourself have been in the past, and God will crown you with a large increase of honor and discipleship. Keep in mind the saying "As much labor is needed for conservation as for creation; we are always in a bad plight:" and put forth your strength accordingly, lest another take your crown.

I am not aware that the Hindoo Religion was ever embodied, in all its essential principles,—to the satisfaction of religious Hindoos, in any single life of a well-known brother man. Choitonyo, with his doctrine of universal salvation by a loving faith, *bhakti*, was at best the Wesley of Hindooism. His doctrine was not salvation by love, faith, *thought* and *work*. It was far from the realization of a perfect life: as we see by its sad fruits, to-day. Therefore, my brother, you have not hesitated to declare "Jesus Christ, the greatest and truest benefactor of mankind." You have thus dared,—and may God bless and honor and strengthen you for more of such daring,—to set Jesus Christ foremost on the list of your own religious benefactors. Making him "the greatest," you have gone on to declare, of God in history, that such "true greatness always lives, a standing miracle and an abiding revelation, to speak to endless generations, and to all the nations of the earth, of the

inscrutable riches of God's wisdom, power and goodness." And you say well of all great souls, that "we should so love and revere them, that, under their influence and with their aid, we may find Him whom they reveal."

Yes; men and brothers, be true to God in History. We shall never rightly navigate the ocean of life without a well-thumbed record of the course or courses actually traced and retraced, from point to point of the voyage, and from century to century of human progress. Truly, all life is growth; it is an advance from seed to tree; from the nursery to the college. They of old are the infants of time: and, so far as anything in this young world is ancient, we are the ancients. God give us to know how little we know: and help us to treasure and use that little well. May He save us from the childish folly of putting off in a ship, across a map-less, chart-less ocean, regardless of fog and gale and hurricane. We need a captain and a compass: let us choose the best: the best man, the best record.

Brothers of the Society of Theistic Friends, let me charge each man of you, while keeping an open eye for all truth, to be steadfast, every one of you, to his own convictions. Until fairly and fully convinced, I ask no man of you to say, with Theodore Parker, "Jesus is the mightiest heart that ever beat;" or that the religion that God gave us through Jesus, "the Christianity of Christ, is the one only religion everlasting, ever blest."—No; believe it not, until God gives you to see it so, through study and work.

One thing, however, we will all confess, namely, that the true Theist's Creed, simple and grand as it is in the one word *Theism*, is under natural law and divine commandment to acknowledge both its unity and its diversity; and to confess that its catholicity

and its individuality are equally divine. Let God's every freeman,—

“ He is a freeman whom the truth makes free,
And all are slaves beside ;” —

freely decide and honestly declare *both* these conditions, in his own case, and so affiliate himself to his own circle of sympathy and conviction; being a consistent Theist first, midst and last,—a Theist over all. And we will welcome him as a Theist brother, even though he feel, to-day, the need of no guide to God; and crave the help of no elder brother to aid him in the sore battle of life, and of death: but prefer to say, with single and solitary confidence in Our Father,

“ Oh Thou whose power o'er moving worlds presides,
Whose voice created, and whose wisdom guides,
On darkling man in pure effulgence shine,
And cheer the clouded mind with light divine.

Tis Thine alone to calm the pious breast
With silent confidence, and holy rest :—
From Thee, great God, we spring; to Thee we tend;
Path, motive, guide,—original and end.”

*Babu Dwarka Nath Singhee's Comments on the
Lecture.*

Mr. Dall's discourse on Theism, with Babu Keshub Chunder Sen presiding, fell providentially on the night following that on which Babu Raj Narain Bose delivered his on Hindooism, presided over by Babu Debendernath Tagore. This juncture of affairs marks a wide contrast between the two classes of Brahmos, the conservative and the progressive. Babu Raj Narain Bose affirmed that Hindooism was the best and truest of all religions. He might as well attempt to prove that Paganism is Theism; or call Polytheism Monotheism. Babu Debender

Nath Tagore, the acknowledged leader of the Adi Brahmos, seemingly supported this assertion. I infer from this that the Adi or Old School Brahmos have retrograded for some years past. This retrogression has naturally come of their studied opposition to the progress made by Babu Keshub Chunder Sen and his co-laborers in the work of reformation.

To me, Mr. Dall's speech on Theism is simple, impressive, and convincing. Whoever reads it with attention cannot mistake his meaning. He says 'Theism is man's spiritual allegiance to the Only God; with all his heart, and all his soul, and all his mind, and all his strength.' Where can we get a simpler and better definition of Theism than this? It embraces the whole Brahmo creed. Whoever devotes his heart, soul, mind, and will to the exclusive service of God, is a Theist. He who gives way to no other feelings than holy ones, worships no earthly object, nothing but the true, invisible and only God; entertains no thoughts but those which tend to the glory of his Maker, and whose deeds are dictated by those thoughts; he is a true Brahmo. Then the lecturer clearly proves that a native of any quarter of the globe may be a Brahmo; and gives good reasons for calling himself a Christian Brahmo. He truly calls 'Jesus the consummate flower and best fruit of pure Hebrew Theism.' I say, with him, that 'Jesus is the elder brother of us all; the great first-born, greatest in service, and ever simple as a child.'

Mr. Dall has studied the life of Jesus above forty years, and compared it with the lives of other great teachers of the various nations of the earth, and found it the best of all; consequently, he cannot but stick to Jesus as his guide. He gathers his Theism from the teachings of Jesus; he finds no other teacher of religion, neither Mahomed, Confucius, Zoroaster nor Choitonyo,—preaching such strictly pure Theism as did the son of the carpenter of Nazareth. Now, to disown Jesus, who has led Mr. Dall, from first to last, to this sublime and catholic creed, would be, for him, an act of the grossest ingratitude. Can any really devout man who has thoroughly studied the sayings and deeds of Jesus, as well as those of other religious leaders, gainsay what Mr. Dall emphatically affirms, namely, that Christianity has done more for Theism than all the 'Ten Great

Religions' put together; and of all the great religions is immeasurably the greatest and most catholic. What Brahmo, knowing this, can reasonably object to Mr. Dall's calling himself a Christian Brahmo?

The learned President, Babu Keshub Chunder Sen, protests against the 'unhappy expression' Christian Brahmo; freely acknowledging that 'True Christianity is Theism, and is far from being hostile to it.' I do not see consistency in this. What can be fairer than Mr. Dall's declaration,—'A book-guide and a man-guide are good things to have, in a strange city. Choose, every man for himself; and the best he can find. For mine, I prefer Jesus and the record of his life; 'Jesus Christ and him crucified.' Get better if you can: I know of no better than his guidance, called Christian. Yet the President merely says of this,—'We are apt to look upon those books and prophets as our guides to whose teachings we trace our conversion.'

This may be so. Still let us thank Our Father, for what Jesus brought. Let us confess our pre-eminent obligations to him: to Jesus, who welcomes all other bringers of good;—and thus become followers of God, as dear children.

DWARKA NAUTH SINGHEE.

The latest declared doctrine of the Progressive Brahmos touching their need of divine guidance, through holy men and holy books. As given by Babu P. C. Mozoomdar, colleague of Babu K. C. Sen.

"One cannot assert" [page 4] "that whenever we contemplate the constitution of the mind, we are at once led to recognise God and his attributes. This is not true. If it had been so, then all of us who possess minds to contemplate would have been led to worship Him, in the absence of any other aid. But no. It is not in the human mind to lead us to the hidden paths of God's existence,—to lead us to attain the supreme goal of our mortal and immortal life. When we contemplate the past sins and wickednesses of our lives, friends cannot give us consolation, the domestic circle denies peace, and the whole creation is full of gloom. I grant, it is true that at this juncture we

do feel the necessity of some outward help, be it book or man: but I deny that when I am in this condition of misery, there is any book or teacher that can bring peace into my heart without the revelation of Him who is the Father of our spirits. It is for Him to give us the revelation, the truth, the light, the peace; though it is for them to give us help. The man or the book may be the medium through which that light is imparted. Can I then dispense with man or book? No.—Freely shall I hold by them and believe them for what they are, and no more. If I find a brother by my side who will struggle with me in my struggles, and share with me my afflictions, my soul is blessed more than I can express. That sympathy is invaluable, that example is invaluable, for my peace and salvation. I fully admit this.—I admit also that if, in this state, I chance to come across a book which delineates in vivid colors the struggles and experiences of men whose kindred spirit suffered at one time as I suffer,—a book which points out how such men sought Him and found Him; how they wept and watched for God's kingdom and found it out at last;...if such men would, in such books, teach me as they were taught, and lead me as they were led, through the great relations and principles, which were and shall be forever true,—I say, if such things were to be found in a book, that book would be a treasure to me. I would wear it in the heart of my heart...It is the loving voice of a religious teacher who can understand my difficulties and feel for me, and lead me to that path of life with which he is familiar, when I stand involved in the midst of gloom. Blessed be the book through which he speaks. Search, and you will find such books; seek, and you shall find such men. It is from them I say that you can find out the fountain of that bliss without which your soul cannot live.

Sooner would I ask you to depend on no revelation of the external world,—to place no reliance upon the outpourings of the mind, than I would advise you to dispense with that glorious volume of truth, faith, love and self-sacrifice, which lies before all men, in order that they may be led to the throne of Him who is the Father of them all. Of course you cannot take one exclusive book, or one exclusive man in this light...Still it is impossible for

you and me to make the slightest progress in spiritual matters, if we spurn at the teachings of those great men and prophets who have toiled, under the inspiration of God, who have lived and died, not for any selfish end, but that our wandering spirits might be led into the safe harbor of heaven. Therefore, my dear brethren, I draw the conclusion I drew on the last occasion; You must always consider the teachings of religious men and religious books as the chief source from which you can learn on the subject of religion."

[Extract from the Third Lecture on Theology recently given in Bombay by Babu Protap Chunder Mozoomdar.]

In his second Lecture on Theology at Bombay, Babu P. C. Mozoomdar, pages 7 & 8, speaks as follows:—

"The universe is dumb, dead and senseless,—unable either to understand or explain its own glories....The humble seeker of truth says, 'If I am to find Thee, Oh Lord, as Thou art in thy wisdom and goodness, I must seek Thee, not in this mighty space but in the temple of my own heart. And thus, returning within itself, the mind beholds all intelligence, goodness, love and holiness enthroned upon the glory of eternal existence,—all within and nothing without....But (page 8) when the heart returns within itself, it finds within its own folds the face of Him who made it in His own image, and cries out, 'Our Father which art in Heaven.' You know who it was that first prayed this prayer. It was the Man that brought back the wandering world from its wild ways of imagination and uncertainty, to the true path of devotion and filial love;—brought back erring man to worship God in the temple of his own soul. There you must return. There you must see Him always, warming up your whole nature, watching your struggles, and wiping away your tears. Ah! *there* let us all cry! 'Our Father which art in Heaven.'—Many think that we have no faith in any kind of religious teaching and religious teachers; that we recognize no books, no precepts. This charge is ungenerous.... How can we shut our eyes to the faith and piety of those

men who have lived for us and died for us, and left to us, after their death, the invaluable inheritance of the spirituality, love and righteousness of their examples?—You catch the holy fire of religion, love and faith from a divine teacher, sooner than you catch it from the world without, or the mind within....No one ought to shut his eyes to that glorious volume of human faith and human piety, the pages of which are written so legibly in golden characters,—aye, also in characters of blood, spread out for the guidance of man to God. I cannot disregard, in my studies and efforts after religion, that glorious volume in which all mankind, all races and generations, have inscribed their spiritual experiences and thoughts, their faith and struggles to do God's will on earth as it is done in heaven....Let us all be taught by the holy experiences, faith and piety of God's faithful children, for such are indeed the world's scriptures... Open the revelation of nature, the revelation of the soul, the revelation of holy lives; and be good, be pure, be saved."

Babu Keshub Chunder Sen, in London, said :—

"Do we not feel that the *spirit* of Christianity comes to us as something very natural and congenial to our hearts, something with which, by the very constitution of our peculiarly Indian mind, we are bound to sympathise. The true spirit of Christianity shall yet be accepted by India. There may be thousands amongst my countrymen who deny that; but I for one, so long as I live, shall continue to say that the real spirit of Christ, India will one day receive. (Loud applause.) But I cannot say the same thing in regard to the doctrines and dogmas which you have presented to India (Applause).

The Hindu, passing through a bewildering series of endless dogmas, still cherishes in his heart respect and reverence for the central figure of Christ." (Hear, Hear.)

The Indian Mirror; Keshub Babu's organ,—in an article entitled 'Rajah Kali Krishna's Triumph,' [October 11th, 1872] asks, "Are the gentlemen of the Adi Somaj falling back upon pure Hindooism?"—It condemns the Adis, or

Old School, for their "inconsistency and hypocrisy." It favors Dr. Murray Mitchell's recent lecture on Hindooism, as Pantheism gone to seed in Polytheism. And it says "Our Ram Mohun Roy had an unbounded regard and love for Christ which those who worship in his [Ram Mohun Roy's] church sadly lack; and which they ridicule and condemn in others. They are haters of Christ and of his fundamental doctrines; and many of them look upon him as a fakeer, a fool, and an imposter. In these respects they have proved untrue to the faith of the great Founder of Brahmoism."

Note.—This lecture was prepared by request of the Progressive Brahmos, of whose Society of Theistic Friends, or body of theological inquirers, Babu Keshub Chunder Sen is President.

It was received with a unanimous vote of thanks. A general discussion ensued, in which divergent opinions were freely expressed by the president, Brahmo missionaries, trinitarian Christians, and others. The lecture was then printed, entire, in the Progressive Brahmo organ, *The Indian Mirror*:—a fourth issue containing, in brief, the remarks of the president and other speakers.

September, 1872.



